

January 23, 1963

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QUESTION -- A columnist has reported that a U.S. Navy destroyer recently tried to stop a Soviet merchant ship that apparently was enroute to Cuba. The column states that the ship refused to stop, identify herself, or give her destination; that the U.S. commander requested permission to board and inspect the ship and that this was denied.

FACTS -- U.S. Navy ships customarily exchange call signs with ships they meet on the high seas. Our ships have done so with Soviet ships on a number of occasions since the quarantine was lifted. At no time has an American destroyer captain attempted to stop and search a Soviet ship since the quarantine of Cuba was lifted.

QUESTION -- How many Cubans are now undergoing training in the U.S. Army?

FACTS -- As of January 17 there were 2,157. All are stationed at Fort Jackson, South Carolina

QUESTION -- Have any of the Bay of Pigs Prisoners volunteered for this program?

FACTS -- No, not to our knowledge thus far.

Question -- What comment do you have on the news stories this week that the United States had promised no air cover for the Bay of Pigs invasion.

Facts -- The Department of Defense has had no comment on the Bay of Pigs matter.